

**WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION**



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In reply please refer to:

Prière de rappeler la référence: T16/87/2

25 February 1975

Dear Professor Lederberg,

Dr Goodman has asked me to reply to your letter of 29 January, concerning the Planning Group report for the Special Programme on tropical diseases. To take your points serially:

1. and 2. - The fundamental biological study aspect perhaps does not receive the emphasis in the report which it should have done. Certainly, task forces would be able to promote basic research and will contain the appropriate scientists not necessarily involved in tropical diseases. We have recently had discussions with Dr Sydney Brenner and Professor Alfred Tissières about molecular biological approaches based on the understanding of the biology of parasites, and especially Dr Brenner's work on flat worms.

3. - There is no question that viruses should properly be included in a programme of research on tropical diseases, but for the moment, it was felt that the field should be restricted. No doubt viruses will be included in the future.

4. - I think this point is already answered under 1. and 2.

5. - The idea of the programme has very recently been broadened to be a global programme, and Chagas disease is now included. PAHO is kept informed about our activities. I would welcome suggestions for someone from South America to advise on our planning.

6. - I am just back from a visit to N'dola. In essence, what is there is a beautiful 650-bed hospital but with rather poorly developed services within the hospital and in the local community. The present plan is to proceed step-wise by setting up epidemiological studies on the surrounding population and drug trials for schistosomiasis,

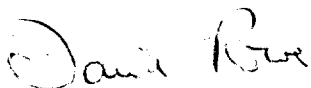
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while at the same time strengthening laboratory and clinical services for the hospital. On that basis, it would be possible to decide what developments could and should take place there. There is only one university in Zambia, at Lusaka, which is 30 minutes by air and three and a half hours by road. It is hoped to arrange for collaboration, but distance is clearly a problem.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Rowe". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David S. Rowe, M.D.  
Special Programme for Research  
and Training in Tropical Diseases

cc: Dr H. C. Goodman